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THE TRUE SPIRIT OF QUEBEC

SIR LOMER GOUIN'S SPEECH
ON THE
FRANCŒUR MOTION

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A GREAT AND USEFUL DEBATE

On the 17th January, 1918, Mr. J. N. Francoeur, member for Lotbinière, made the following motion in the Legislative Assembly of Quebec:

"That this House is of opinion that the Province of Quebec would be disposed to accept the breaking of the Confederation Pact of 1867, if, in the other provinces, it is believed that she is an obstacle to the union, progress and development of Canada."

The debate which ensued was remarkable for its calmness, dignity of tone and loftiness of views. Its main usefulness consists in that it gave the speakers an opportunity to recall the historical circumstances under which the evolution of Canada from a Crown colony into a great Confederation was achieved—it was a timely "lest-we-forget" reminder, if we consider that the unity of purpose of our nation largely depends on the continuity and perpetuation of its traditions, and therefore it is important that the young generations and the ever-incoming groups of immigration be kept constantly acquainted with the leading features at least of our political history. How many new-comers for instance ignore that had there been no such thing as French Canada, this half-continent would still lay under a regime of centralized authority (European style) instead of its present democratic and improved organisation of decentralisation, home rule and federal division of labour for the common weal? In the eyes of many therefore, the Francoeur motion at first sight appeared as an attempt at secession, whereas, in reality, it was

just the reverse—a ringing objurgation addressed to those who, in their efforts to blackball and ostracize Quebec out of the Confederation, have virtually given the first notice of dissolution of partnership, and shown themselves the real separatists.

Mr. Francoeur,—in presenting his motion, took good care to justify it as an answer to the “campaign of falsehood, sophistry, insults, slander and hatred” that had been going on against French Canada for the last three years. He recited numerous proofs of the provocation which impelled him to act, and which tended to reopen the whole problem of fifty years ago. He quoted the Fathers of Confederation to show that the compact of 1867 was a compromise, loyally adhered to by both races, which, in the words of the late Sir John A. Macdonald himself, were to be on an equal footing. To those who asked: What does Quebec want? *Mr. Francoeur* answered: We want to live and let live, because nowhere has it been possible to establish anything lasting without freedom.

Mr. Sauvé,—the Opposition leader, while declaring himself against conscription, not as a French-Canadian, but as a citizen of Canada, opposed the motion, which he considered as inopportune and out of place in the Provincial Legislature.

Mr. David,—member for Terrebonne, in a well matured address, ascribed the whole trouble to the introduction of the Imperialistic idea in opposition to the Canadian mentality, the creation of which was one of the objects the statesmen of 1867 had in view. The alleged isolation of Quebec in the Confederation of 1918, he attributed to the fact that while, and for the very reason that, her people was staunchly loyal to Great Britain, “that model of human parliamentary institutions,” they were none the less devoted to the Canadian ideals and to their democratic institutions. Recalling the latest violations

of the letter and spirit of the Constitution, he pointed out that works erected on such foundations carried in themselves the germ of destruction and ruin.

Mr. Laferté,—representing Drummond, a mixed constituency, supported the motion as being proper and coming at the right moment, because, he said: Either our traducers are right or not; if what they say is true, they should be the first to demand separation; if not, they should apologize.

Mr. Bouchard (St. Hyacinth) dissented, saying that verbal provocation had been working on both sides.

Mr. Tessier,—recalled that it was in his county of Rimouski that Baldwin found a seat after his defeat in York, while Lafontaine, when defeated in Terrebonne, was elected in an Ontario constituency. This happened in the forties, at a time when the situation was much more critical than nowadays, which, said *Mr. Tessier*, should make our slanderers realize once for all that they do not represent the will of the majority, that they cannot change history, and that the French nationality is here to stay.

The next speaker, *Mr. L. A. Cannon*, member for Quebec Centre, the very spot where was held the Conference of 1864 which laid the foundations of the Confederation, boldly and eloquently traced back the causes of the present trouble to the subversive Bourassa campaign, which instead of promoting the interests of his province, acted as a political boomerang against it. He nevertheless believed in the possibility of preserving racial individuality without jeopardizing national unity, which was the dream of the Fathers of Confederation.

Another representative of the city of Quebec, *Mr. Létourneau*, supported the motion, in which he saw not an act of defiance, but a chivalrous invitation to the traducers of his race and province.

Mr. Gault, (St. George's. Montreal)—opposed the motion, the practical effect of which would turn Canada back to the condition of fifty years ago. He regretted that the people of the other provinces were put under the impression that the Roman Catholic church had not been sympathetic to the Allies, and that the French Canadians were lukewarm in this war. As to the Ontario school difficulty, he was of the opinion that it would have been settled had not the war started.

Dr. Gregoire (Frontenac)—who has a son at the front, warmly resented the charge of cowardice implied in the utterances of the previous speaker.

After *Sir Lomer Gouin's* speech, an extensive report of which is given in the following pages, *Mr. Francoeur* stated that as he had obtained the desired effect, he would withdraw his motion.

THE PREMIER'S SPEECH

After a few introductory words of congratulation to the previous speakers whom he complimented on the dispassionate and dignified tone of the whole debate, Sir Lomer spoke as follows:

The honourable member for Lotbinière has stated the motives which induced him to make his motion, when he said that he wished to reply to insulting remarks and unjust articles appearing in certain newspapers. It has been contended, I know, that this was not his sole object, but that he was inspired by spleen caused by the results of the last elections. Another charge was that his motion was intended as an attack on the Federal Government, and lastly that there was in his proposition something bordering on disloyalty, which is to my mind the most amazing statement.

Such imputations are unwarranted, I should say. Those who have read history and followed its development since 1867 cannot but consider such a criticism as absolutely unfair. For instance, if I am permitted to open one chapter of the history of one of our sister provinces, I find that on the 8th April, 1886, the Legislature of Nova Scotia carried by a vote of fifteen to seven, a resolution the purpose of which was to secure the secession of that Province from the Dominion of Canada. The resolution was worded as follows and was presented by the then Prime Minister the Hon. W. S. Fielding, one of the most distinguished and respected leaders in Canadian politics:

"The Honourable the Provincial Secretary, pursuant to notice given on a previous day, moved that the House do come to the following resolutions, viz:

"That, previous to the Union of the Provinces, the Province of Nova Scotia was in a most healthy financial condition;

"That by the terms of the Union the chief sources of revenue were transferred to the Federal Government;

"That strong objections were taken at the time of the Union to the financial terms thereof, relating to the Province of Nova Scotia, as being wholly inadequate to meet the requirements of the various services left under the management of the Provincial Legislature;

"That an appeal was made to the Imperial Government for a repeal of the Union as far as it related to this Province;

"That while they refused to assent to such repeal until a further trial of the Union was had, the Imperial Government, in the Colonial Secretary's despatch of the 10th June, 1868, to Lord Monck, requested that the Government and Parliament of Canada would modify any arrangement respecting taxation, or respecting the regulation of trade and fisheries, which might prejudice the interests of Nova Scotia;

"That on the 6th day of October, 1868, the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald, in a letter to the Honourable Joseph Howe, referring to the above despatch, stated as follows:

"The Canadian Government are not only ready but anxious to enter upon a frank and

full discussion of these points and are prepared, in case the pressure of taxation should be shown to be unequal or unjust to Nova Scotia, to relieve that pressure by every means in their power. They are also ready to discuss any financial or commercial questions that may be raised by the Nova Scotia Government or yourself or representatives of Nova Scotia in the Parliament of the Dominion"; and he further said: "You may remember that I suggested to the Committee that Mr. Annand, the Finance Minister of the Province, or any other gentleman selected for the purpose, should visit Ottawa and sit down with the Finance Minister here, for the purpose of ascertaining whether any inequality or injustice exists, the extent of such inequality, and the best remedy, and I now reiterate the assurance I then gave, that the Government here will consider the question, not in a rigid, but in the most liberal spirit, with a desire to do even more than justice for the sake of securing the co-operation of the people of Nova Scotia in working out the new constitution. We will enter upon the inquiry whenever it will suit your convenience, and the Canadian Government engage to press upon Parliament, with all the influence they possess, the legislation required to carry out any financial readjustment that may be agreed to."

"That the Dominion Government and Parliament have never carried out the request or desire of the Imperial Government and the promise of the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald, as above quoted;

"That after nineteen years under the Union, successive Governments have found that the objections which were urged against the terms of Union at first apply with still greater force now than in the first year of the Union, and the feeling of discontent with regard to the financial arrangement is now believed by this House to be more general and more deeply fixed than ever before;

"That Nova Scotia, previous to the Union, had the lowest tariff, and was, notwithstanding, in the best financial condition of any of the provinces entering the Union;

"That the commercial as well as the financial condition of Nova Scotia is in an unsatisfactory and depressed condition;

"That it seems evident that the terms of the "British North America Act", combined with the high tariff and fiscal laws of the Dominion, are largely the cause of this unsatisfactory state of the finances and trade of Nova Scotia;

"That there is at present no prospect that, while the Province remains upon the existing terms of Union a member of the Canadian Federation, any satisfactory improvement in the foregoing respects, is at all probable;

"That previous to 1867, negotiations were in progress for a Union of the Maritime Provinces, but were interrupted by the negotiations for the larger Union;

"That it now appears as it did then, that the interests of the people of the several Maritime Provinces now incorporated with Canada are in most respects identical;

"That the members of this branch of the Legis-

lature of Nova Scotia are of opinion, and do hereby declare their belief, that the financial and commercial interests of the people of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island would be advanced by these Provinces withdrawing from the Canadian Federation and uniting under one Government;

‘ That if it be found impossible, after negotiations for that purpose, to secure the co-operation of the respective Governments of the sister provinces in withdrawing from the Confederation and entering instead into a Maritime Union, then this Legislature deems it absolutely necessary that Nova Scotia, in order that its railways, and other public works and services may be extended and maintained as the requirements of the people need them; its industries properly fostered, its commerce invigorated and expanded, and its financial interests placed upon a sound basis, such as was the case previous to Confederation, should ask permission from the Imperial Parliament to withdraw from the Union with Canada, and return to the status of a Province of Great Britain, with full control over all fiscal laws and tariff regulations within the Province, such as prevailed previous to Confederation;

“That this House thus declares its opinion and belief, in order that candidates for the suffrages of the people at the approaching elections may be enabled to place this vital and important question of separation from Canada, before them for decision at the polls.”

(Which being seconded, and a debate arising thereon, the question being propounded from the

chair that such resolution be agreed to, and the House dividing thereon, there appeared for the motion, fifteen; against the motion, seven.)

(Journal and Proceedings of the House of Assembly of the Province of Nova Scotia, Session, 1886.)

In the election that followed, the people of Nova Scotia voted almost unanimously for the breaking of the Federal compact. Was there any recrimination in the Province of Quebec or the other provinces against Nova Scotia? Were the Hon. Mr. Fielding and the people of his province accused of disloyalty?

It was the same thing with conscription. They made it a crime for Quebec to discuss that question. Above all it was a crime for Quebec to vote as she did in the last election. Why was it not a crime for New Brunswick, or Nova Scotia, the home province of the Prime Minister of Canada, who gave a majority against conscription, or still more for Prince Edward Island, which pronounced unanimously against that measure? That is not impartiality. It is injustice. That is not the British fair play which we have the right to demand in the Province of Quebec as in the other provinces of Confederation.

Speaking of fair play, I may say that the Leader of the Opposition has not used much of it in attacking me the other day. He had forged a thunderbolt which was designed to annihilate me, the first rumblings of which had found an echo in his organ *L'Evenement*, in the sensational tone that you know. My honourable friend spoke well, eloquently at times, and courageously.

At the same time it was evident that while repudiating his old party alliances, he was managing for some apology at the hands of his friends, and for that purpose he found nothing better than to take me to task. After having spent several weeks in quietly preparing his speech and the amendment which was to follow, scarcely an hour before the meeting of the House my honourable friend hailed me before notary (the member for Lake St. John), blandly bidding me to introduce the amendment he dared not to propose himself ①.

I declined to do so. I did refuse, Sir, because that amendment was not acceptable, because it was out of order, because the honourable Leader of the Opposition himself could not vote for it, and lastly because I am not the man to raise false hopes in the hearts of my compatriots, which could not but lead them to disappointment. The object of that amendment was to ask the disavowal of the Conscription act; it would have come to nothing.

Mr. Sauvé.—If the Prime Minister agrees to take charge of the amendment, I declare that I will support it. Moreover, if he can promise me the support of the Government majority, I am ready to introduce it myself.

Sir Lomer Gouin.—The Leader of the Opposition may present any amendment he wishes; so long as they conform to the rules of the House, and

① The amendment here referred to, the text of which formed part of a previous address of Mr. Sauvé (the leader of the opposition), asked that the Imperial Government be petitioned to have the Military Service Act repealed, in virtue of clause 56 of the British North America Act.

are in the interests of the Province and the country, I can assure him of my support.

But the Leader of the Opposition vainly tries to get away from his former attitude, he knows very well the people of the Province have not taken him seriously. The population, as well as the honourable members of this House, are well aware that my honourable friend is merely playing political tactics.

We have no right, Mr. Speaker, to play with the sincerity of the good people of this Province. Repeal the Act? But could the Province pronounce more emphatically, more unanimously on this question, than she has done at the last popular consultation? On the other hand, is it believable that the amendment so tenderly elaborated and incubated by the Leader of the Opposition would be enough to make the Imperial government disallow the Military Service Act? My honourable friend was better inspired when he said we should leave to Sir Wilfred Laurier the task of clearing the ground and finding a solution of the problem.

He found fault with me for not having gone to Ottawa when Conscription was debated. Had I gone there, he would have accused me of meddling into matters that were none of my business. I am pretty sure he would even have held me responsible for the defections from the liberal ranks. Then, if it was my duty to go to Ottawa, was it not also the duty of the Leader of the Opposition? Why did he not at least try his persuasive powers on his friends who are responsible for that very Conscription law on account of which he now repudiates them?

Mr. Sauvé.—I declared myself against conscription. The Prime Minister on his part has made no declaration during the Conscription debate.

Sir Lomer Gouin.—I declared myself from the very first. It is true that I added that I had absolute confidence in Sir Wilfrid Laurier; I said that we should leave it to his direction, as the honourable member himself suggests to-day. He therefore contradicted himself when the other day he attacked me for the speeches I delivered during the last campaign.

Mr. Sauvé.—I attacked them for their violence.

Sir Lomer Gouin.—I merely expounded the elements of parliamentary law, the elements of English Constitutional law, I merely wished to define British liberty. And if the Leader of the Opposition gave heed to the promptings of his heart and his head, he would congratulate me as I congratulate him on speaking as he has done, on separating his cause from the cause of those who govern us at Ottawa.

Truly, it would have been better had my honourable friend omitted the sensation that caused him so much work and worry; the more so in view of the poor reward he received for all his trouble. The very day following his speech, the "Chronicle" newspaper plainly gave him to understand, that he had to fall in or step out; and the "L'Événement" which on Friday had burnt its sweetest incense in his honour, came out the next day with what was practically a writ of eviction, by order. Thus is it shown once more that thunderbolts do not fall every time it thunders, and the great sensation which my honourable friend expected to

create recalls the old story of the mountain bringing forth a mouse.

Mr. Sauvé.—It has served in bringing forth a Cromwell.

Sir Lomer Gouin.—When I mentioned Cromwell, Mr. Speaker, I was merely quoting the leading conservative organ, the "Gazette."

Mr. Sauvé.—Two friends.

Sir Lomer Gouin.—Yes, and I am not ashamed of it, but I pity my friend, his speeches have a far-fetching estranging effect.

(As Mr. Sauvé still insisted on speaking, the Premier continued:)

I beg the Leader of the Opposition to give me the same attention I gave him. Not that I am afraid of interruptions. He will see, in the course of my remarks, that I feel myself quite able to answer him. Let us now come to the motion.

I want to be clearly understood on this point, Mr. Speaker, I believe in the Canadian Confederation. The federal system appears to me as the only possible system in Canada, on account of our differences of race and creed, and also on account of the variety and multiplicity of the local needs in such an immense country.

To make myself clearer, I tell you that, had I been a party to the negotiations of 1864, I would certainly have tried, assuming that I had the authority to do so, to obtain for the French Canadian minority in the sister provinces the same protection that was obtained for the English minority in the Province of Quebec. I would have demanded that, not as a concession, but as a measure of justice. And even had it been refused

me, I would have voted for the resolution of 1864. During the debate of 1865, I would have renewed my demand for this measure of caution and justice. Had I not succeeded then, I would still have voted for the system as passed on March 12th, 1865. Even at this hour, Sir, in spite of the troubles that have arisen in the administration of our country since 1867, in spite of the impediments set up against those of Quebec who are the minority in the other provinces, if I had to choose between the Confederation and the Act of 1791 or that of 1840-41, I would still vote in favour of Confederation.

It is well to tell the young men, those of middle age and even those older men who have not had time to study history, that Confederation was not the result of a whim, not an act of levity, but the result of necessity. The Act was freely accepted by Quebec. Without Cartier, without the popular wish of Lower Canada we would have had no Confederation. For a number of years prior to 1865, the country was drifting towards a deadlock, the administration was in a state of chaos. Every politician, all those who took an interest in public affairs, realized and declared that there ought to be a change in our system of government and that the Act of Union of 1841 could not work any longer. It must however be acknowledged that that Act of Union, in spite of its original injustice, had not prevented the country from growing and progressing in agriculture, colonisation, trade and industry. It was under the Union that our municipal institutions were es-

tablished, that our school system was developed and that responsible government was granted us. It was perhaps between 1840 and 1867 that the struggle of our political parties was the most bitter and the most rabid, but despite those quarrels, the offsprings of the two great races kept on colonising and developing the country. Our forebears steadily went on with their work notwithstanding the political storms which blew over the country.

The preceeding speakers have recalled the struggles of that period. The main cause of division between politicians and between provinces was the question of representation. Prior to Union, the population of the Province of Quebec was 300,000 greater than that of Ontario. In 1844, Lower Canada had 200,000 more population than Upper Canada. In 1849, Papineau wanted to amend the Act of 1841 on the ground that it was unjust to Lower Canada, which still had the same representation as Upper Canada. He failed. Later on, it was Upper Canada which demanded the change. Brown and his friends made the same request, but without any more success. Deeper and deeper grew the disunion. It was then that the cry of "*No Quebec domination! No French domination!*" was started, and now and then loudly repeated, especially in election times. It was felt that the welfare of the country demanded a radical diversion from those quarrels, and in 1858 the Cartier-Macdonald cabinet laid down the principle of Confederation. We find it in the speech from the Throne read by Sir Edmund Head at the close of the session, as follows:

"I propose in the course of the recess to communicate with Her Majesty's Government, and with the Governments of the sister Colonies, on another matter of very great importance. I am desirous of inviting them to discuss with us the principles on which a bond of a federal character, uniting the Provinces of British North America, may perhaps hereafter be practicable."

Cartier, Macdonald and their friends were from that time already confident that the only way to emerge from the muddle was a confederation of the provinces. Nothing was done, however, that year, save sending a delegation to England. In 1860, Brown proposed a federation of Upper and Lower Canada, based on resolutions passed by a convention which had met in Toronto. Sir Antoine-Aimé Dorion and Messrs. Drummond and McGee were the only members of Lower Canada to support Brown, whose motion was rejected. Then the political parties resumed their quarrels and scrambles, leaving in utter oblivion the resolution of 1858. In 1864, Brown offered to the Taché-Macdonald minority as a solution of the problem: Confederation.

In the same year, delegations from the colonies of British North America met in Conference in Prince Edward Island, and thereafter at Quebec where were adopted the resolutions which served as a basis to the Constitution of 1867.

In the session of 1865, the Prime Minister of Canada, Sir E.-P. Taché, in moving the adoption of those resolutions, spoke as follows:

"The time had arrived when, as he believed, all the patriotic men in the country ought to unite

in providing a remedy for the troubles we had to contend with. It might be said that the remedy was not required, but he would like to know what other could be proposed. Legislation in Canada for the last two years had come almost to a standstill, and if any one would refer to the Statute Book since 1862, he would find that the only public measures there inscribed had been passed simply by the permission of the Opposition. This was the condition of things for two years, and if this were an evil there was another not less to be deplored; he referred to the administration of public affairs during the same period. From the 21st May, 1862, to the end of June, 1864, there had been no less than five different governments in charge of the business of the country."

Sir Etienne-Pascal Taché also said:

"At the time these measures were resolved upon," (the federation of the two provinces or confederation of all the British colonies of North America)—"the country was bordering on civil strife ①."

After him, Sir George-Etienne Cartier said:

"The matter resolved itself in this, either we must obtain British North American Confederation, or be absorbed in an American Confederation ②."

Sir John A. Macdonald saw but three alternatives: representation by population, Annexation, or Confederation of the Colonies.

Sir Antoine-Aimé Dorion wanted a federation of the two provinces; he was opposed to a con-

① Debates in the Parliament of Canada on Confederation, 1865, page 9.

② Ibidem, p. 55.

federation of the colonies, in fear of legislative Union. He was, however, willing to accept the government's proposition, subject to the people's approval.

Letellier de Saint-Just was squarely opposed to Confederation without a consultation of the people. He preferred the Act of Union with representation based on population.

The two great objections then raised against Confederation in Lower Canada were for many the fear of legislative union, and for the others the apprehension that the English minority might be molested by the French majority. It was in answer to the latter objection that Sir E.-P. Taché made the following declaration addressed to the whole population of Ontario:

"If a Federal Union were obtained it would be tantamount to a separation of the Provinces, and Lower Canada would thereby preserve its autonomy together with all the institutions it held so dear, and over which they could exercise the watchfulness and surveillance necessary to preserve them unimpaired. But there might be a portion of the inhabitants of Lower Canada who might at a first glance have greater reason to complain than the French Roman Catholics, and these were the English Protestants. And why? Because they were in a minority; but he thought that if they took the trouble fully to consider the subject, they would be reassured and satisfied with the scheme. First a great event had taken place; the law of Lower Canada had been consolidated and the English speaking people residing in that section had got reconciled to it; in fact they

were well satisfied therewith. In this respect, then, they were secure. But they might say that the majority of the Local Legislative might hereafter be unjust to them, but he thought that on looking at the past, their fears might be allayed. Before the Union of the provinces, where the large majority of the members in the Legislature were French, the English inhabitants had never found cause of complaint against them. In no instance, had injustice been attempted."

Noble and proud words, which were a few days later confirmed by Hon. Mr. McGee, when he said:

"Neither do I believe that my Protestant compatriots need have any such fear. The French Canadians have never been an intolerant people ①."

And Attorney-General John A. Macdonald (Sir John) added:

"That the government would bring down a measure to amend the school law of Lower Canada, protecting the rights of the minority, and which at the same time, I believe, would be satisfactory to the majority, who have always hitherto shown respect for the rights of the minority, and no doubt will continue to do so ②."

The above declaration by Sir E.-P. Taché, Mr. Speaker, could have been repeated without any fear of being contradicted, by all my predecessors, by every one of the Prime Ministers of Quebec ever since 1867. I may repeat it myself with pride to-day, sure to be supported by all the

① Debates on Confederation, p. 143.

② Ibid., p. 18.

representatives of the minority in this House, just the same as the Prime Minister of 1865 was then supported by McGee, Macdonald and the whole deputation of both Canadas.

The propositions of 1864 were extensively, eloquently and ably debated during the session of 1865. Both parties, liberals and conservatives, may justly be proud of their then leaders, whom we now consider as our political ancestors. After a three months debate the majority pronounced itself in favour of Confederation; on the 13th March the resolutions were voted, and on the 1st July, 1867, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were constituted in Confederation under the British North America Act.

In 1870, Manitoba joined us, and in the same year the Canadian Government made the acquisition of the North West Territories. In 1871, Columbia in her turn entered in the Canadian Confederation, and in 1873 Prince Edward Island did the same.

Well, for fifty years, we have been living under this regime. We have had some troubles, even pretty rough scrambles; but to this day, have we any right to say that the system has failed? I do not believe it.

When I look at the results that have been achieved, when I see the developments that have been realized, when I make an inventory of our progress, I am inclined to say with Sir Wilfrid Laurier "that the hopes of the Fathers of Confederation have been outstripped."

Allow me, Mr. Speaker, to quote a few figures

which will illustrate before this House some of the Canadian achievements since 1867:

AREA OF CANADA

In 1867.....	540,000 square miles
In 1917.....	3,729,665 " "

POPULATION OF CANADA

1867.....	3,600,000 souls
1917.....	7,600,000 " "

POPULATION OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

1861.....	1,110,664 souls
1916.....	2,305,754 " "

CROP VALUATION

The value of crops in Canada, for the last fifteen years, has increased from \$195,000,000 in 1901 to \$841,000,000 in 1917.

EXPORTS IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

In 1868-70, Canada exported \$13,000,000 in agricultural products.—In 1916-17, she exported \$480,000,000.

MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS

In 1868, the production under this head was about *nil*.—In 1917, it amounted to \$1,300,000,000.

FISHERIES

In 1870, the value of our fishery products aggregated \$6,577,391; in 1915, \$31,264,631.

MINES

For the last 40 years, the value of our mining production has increased from \$10,000,000 to \$137,000,000.

FORESTS

In 1871, the value of our forestry production aggregated \$34,000,000.—It is now \$175,000,000.

RAILWAYS

	1867-76	1915
Miles in operation	2,278	35 582
Capital.....	\$257,037,188	\$1,875,810,888
Freight carried		
(tons).....	3,670,836	101,393,988
Passenger trans- portation.....	5,190,416	46,322,035

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

From 1867 to our time, the number of schools in Canada has increased from 10,000 to 26,000; the number of teachers from 11,000 to 39,000; the number of pupils, from 664,000 to 1,327,000; and the cost of teaching from \$2,500,000 to about \$56,000,000.

Dorion, one of the greatest and noblest figures of his time, was suspicious of the federal system, he feared it would result in the swamping of his province in the great Canadian mass. Enemies of the scheme declared as Dorion did that Confederation was nothing but a step towards legislative union. Can it be said to-day that such fears and suspicions were well founded? For fifty years so far our Province forms part of the Confederation, and legislative union has not materialized. We have freely carried on our legislative work, and will continue to do so freely on municipal and scholar matters, and we have never been molested in the administration of our civil laws. The following

list will show you the number of provincial statutes which have been disavowed by Ottawa during the first 40 years of Confederation, for the four pioneer provinces:

Quebec.....	4	Nova Scotia.....	5
Ontario.....	9	New Brunswick.....	1

No, Sir, no Ottawa administration has so far attempted to drive us into legislative union.

My honourable friend for Rimouski (Mr. A. Tessier), in his brilliant and very able address of yesterday, has enumerated the federal attempts at encroachment on the provincial sphere of legislation. He first mentioned the question of fisheries; well, that was a matter of litigation, we went to law, and we won our case. Then came up the dispute about the right to legislate concerning the commercial corporations; we carried it before the courts, and we again won. Finally, there is the very recent case of restriction to the issuance of provincial and municipal debentures; this will be the matter for another law suit, much easier to win than any of those we have had to support in the past.

No, Sir, such differences of opinion are not of a kind likely to lead to legislative union. They exist in all federate countries; just look at the United States where they are of daily occurrence. To the Confederation, to our union with the sister provinces, is due the wonderful advancement of our province, which we witness every day; for instance it cannot be contested that it is the Confederation which has made Montreal the fourth city of North America in point of import-

ance. Now, if we consider the groups of French origin which have settled in the Canadian provinces, can it be said that Confederation has worked to their disadvantage? Would their condition, their fate improve should Quebec break off the federative pact? Here is, Sir, an interesting table which will show you in what proportion the French Canadian population has increased since 1867:

CENSUS OF 1861

	French Population	Total Pop.
Lower Canada.....	867,320	1,110,664
Upper Canada.....	33,287	1,396,091

CENSUS OF 1911

	French Population	Total Pop.
Alberta.....	19,825	374,663
Columbia.....	8,907	392,480
Manitoba.....	30,944	455,614
New Brunswick.....	98,611	351,889
Nova Scotia.....	51,746	492,338
Ontario.....	202,442	2,523,274
Prince Edward Island.....	13,117	93,725
Quebec.....	1,605,330	2,002,712
Saskatchewan.....	23,251	492,432
Yukon.....	482	8,512
Territories.....	226	17,196
	2,054,890	7,204,838

Which goes to show, Sir, that there are presently in Canada, outside of the Province of Quebec, over 500,000 French Canadians, that is more than half our total number in the two Canadas of 1867.

Would our exit from the Confederation be in the interests of those compatriots?

Mention has been made of the school troubles which arose in New Brunswick. But were those troubles caused by the Confederation bond, and would they not have arisen in any case, Confederation or not? Similar difficulties have occurred in Manitoba, where the federal pact was trampled on to the detriment of the minority, a piece of wrongdoing which its authors will have to account for before history. Those questions have been settled as well as they could be, but in Manitoba and New Brunswick, would the French Canadians have received better treatment outside of Confederation?

Ontario also has its own troubles of that kind, still dragging on for a long time. The trouble there is one of school language, the majority contending that the French Canadian family heads are not doing what they should do to make their children learn English, while the minority complain of being unjustly and brutally deprived of the right to have their children learn French in the schools.

Language questions have existed ever since the world is a world; they existed even before the Tower of Babel. They are almost everywhere the occasion of regrettable dissensions and conflicts which always settle themselves in the end, and thus will it end in Ontario.

However, the awful war which is now raging will change many things in every one of the countries engaged in it. Every resource of the mind, every intellectual element whatsoever will

necessarily have to be called on to do their share in repairing the damage caused by the war, and very few nations there will then be that could afford to speak only one language. Fewer still will be those able to impose a common idiom to their populations. I listened yesterday with great pleasure to the honourable member for St. George (Mr. Gault), when he expressed the hope that the Ontario school difficulty would soon be settled. That was sound and sensible talking; his words reminded me of one of the first kings of Hungary, St. Stephen, who said nine hundred years ago: *Regnum unius linguae, regnum imbecilis*. I need not explain, Mr. Speaker, that this quotation is not intended to be applied to any province, I only give it as the sentiment of an authority who experienced difficulties similar to ours.

What would happen if we separated? I would not give it to understand that the honourable member for Lotbinière has put the question, but since we are on this ground it is better for every one of us to speak his mind.

In what position would we be, closed in as we are without access to the sea, during the winter months? How could we defend our immense frontier? What share of the National debt would we have to assume? What would be the customs tariff of the provinces with whom we now enjoy free trade? And finally, what position would our own people living outside Quebec be in?

It is true that our province has been too often unjustly attacked and that we have not been spared verbal insults. But would all that put together be a sufficient justification for us to de-

mand the breaking of a pact which has given us such results as those I summed up a moment ago ?

If we cast our eyes on the neighbouring Republic, there we will find a great lesson of unity and a stimulating precedent. The American Confederation had been in existence for eighty years, all her States vieing with each other in strenuous work and ambition towards the aggrandizement of the common country, when came up the slavery question which nearly ruined that great Republic. The dispute, at first started in the press and on the public platforms, then embittered and transferred to the Congress Houses, led both parties on the battlefield. Such was the Civil war, the secession war which cost our neighbours the life of 500,000 men, over one million wounded, and two billions of dollars.

And what happened after so much ruin, so much misery, so much bloodshedding? Reconciliation, and as a result a fruitful union, which has secured to the American Republic the phenomenal development in growth and wealth that we all know and made her the great power who to-day is joining the Allies in the humanitarian fight for right, justice and liberty.

We complain of insults, of appeals to prejudice, but our fathers have suffered from the very same hardships under every regime, under that of 1760, that of 1764, in 1774, in 1791, still more in 1840, and especially for the past sixty years, always, evermore, and all that for pure party ends, through appeals pandering to the appetite for power and lust for patronage.

We have been insulted, it is true, still I persist

in believing that it was not by the majority, but just by a small number. I believe, Mr. Speaker, nay, I know that the majority of the people in this country are good people.

It was Lord Acton who said that the liberty of a country is measured by the liberty of the minority living therein. Which means that when a minority is ill-treated its members are not alone to suffer, because all righteous, broadminded and generous men belonging to the majority then suffer with them and as much as they do.

We must not forget the qualities of others; we must remember that the growth of our country is due to the combined qualities of all groups and all races.

His Excellency the Governor-General, Duke of Devonshire, was quite right when he said in an address on the occasion of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Confederation:

"Confederation will stand for all time as the monument of the work accomplished by the devotion, the unselfishness, and the far-sighted vision of those men whom we are all proud to call the Fathers of Confederation.

"To those men and their work we owe a debt which we can never repay, and it is for us, in our generation, to see that the glorious heritage to which we have succeeded shall be handed to those who come after us, unimpaired, and, as far as lies in our power, with added glory and lustre."

Yes, Mr. Speaker, let us preserve in its integrity our share in that monument; let us never for a moment entertain the idea of disparaging and belittling the mission that is committed to us.

In the accomplishment of that mission, let us ever draw our inspirations from the gallantry, faith and ideals of our ancestors who were the discoverers of this country, as well as from the great visions of the Fathers of Confederation; so that in reward of our efforts and good deeds the 20th century may reckon Canada among the great nations of the earth.

When I look upon our immense country, when I admire our old provinces with their abundance of historical souvenirs, and the newly-born ones with their prairie lands and their virgin forests, I feel proud of my Canadian name, proud of my country, Canada. I thank God that He has allowed me to be born in this new and fertile land which is sheltered from the bloody carnage that is devastating Europe. A land of liberty and equality which knows no caste and where the only superiority that counts is that of talent, effort and righteousness. A land where fruitful peace will bring union and harmony and promote more progress and prosperity than any other corner of the globe.

It is to preserve to my country her greatness, to guard in the hearts of our children all their hopes, to hand down to them the inheritance we received from our fathers, that we should strive fearlessly against the passing storm, and work ceaselessly and unfalteringly for the maintenance and development of the Canadian Confederation.
